

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEGUCI 04803 01 OF 02 061754Z

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ACTION ARA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SIG-01 FS-01 ABF-01 FBO-02 A-01

SY-05 OC-05 CCO-00 PER-01 OPR-02 MMO-01 /041 W

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R 052110Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1639

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FOR ARA/CEN DIRECTOR LAZAR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN, HO

SUBJECT: AFSP: FOREIGN SERVICE INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS

REF: LETTER DATED OCT. 23, 1975, LAZAR TO AMBASSADOR

1. THERE FOLLOWS THE EMBASSY'S COMPLIANCE REPORT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE 1975 INSPECTION REPORT ON THE CONDUCT OF RELATIONS WITH HONDURAS. RESPONSES ARE KEYED TO THE ORDER OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE MEMORANDA INDICATED.

A. MEMORANDUM NO. 5 - CONSULAR SECTION.

(1) THE THIRD OFFICER POSTION HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT AND WILL BE FILLED IN APRIL 1976.

(2) SUFFICIENT FUNDS HAVE BEEN EARMARKED BY THE EMBASSY TO PERMIT PERIODIC CONSULAR VISITS TO SAN PEDRO SULA. ONE TRIP HAS ALREADY BEEN MADE AND THE CONSUL EXPECTS TO MAKE ANOTHER IN EARLY DECEMBER. BEGINNING IN 1976 A REGULAR SCHEDULE FOR SUCH TRIPS WILL GO

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PAGE 02 TEGUCI 04803 01 OF 02 061754Z

INTO EFFECT.

(3) THE CONSUL HAS TIGHTENED THE SCREENING PROCEDURES FOR NON-IMMIGRANT VISAS AND IS GIVING PERSONAL ATTENTION TO THAT FUNCTION. IN THE PAST QUARTER THE REFUSAL RATE HAS GONE FROM 12.6 PERCENT TO AN AVERAGE OF 29 PERCENT. THE EFFECT OF THIS IS ALREADY SEEN IN A SHARP DECREASE IN THE NUMBER OF VISA HOLDERS DENIED ADMISSION AT PORTS OF ENTRY BY INS.

B. MEMORANDUM NO. 7 - ADMINISTRATION.

(1) A B&F INSTRUCTION WAS ISSUED ON JULY 11, 1975 TO ALL PERSONNEL WHO PREPARE VOUCHERS TO THE EFFECT THAT VOUCHERS PAID IN CASH WILL HENCEFORTH BE COMPLETED TO REFLECT THE AMOUNT TO BE PAID AND THE TYPE OF CURRENCY. FURTHER, THE CASHIER HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO OBTAIN A RECEIPTING SIGNATURE AND TO ENTER THE DATE OF PAYMENT. THESE PROCEDURES HAVE BEEN IN EFFECT SINCE JULY 11, 1975.

(2) A ROSTER OF DISINTERESTED PERSONS HAS BEEN COMPILED AND UNANNOUNCED CASH VERIFICATIONS ARE BEING MADE AT LEAST ONCE EVERY MONTH. IN ADDITION THE NEWLY ARRIVED ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER WILL CONDUCT AN UNANNOUNCED COMPLETE CASH VERIFICATION AT LEAST QUARTERLY. ONE SUCH VERIFICATION WAS MADE WITHIN THE PAST TWO WEEKS.

(3) THE B&F OFFICER HAS PREPARED WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GUIDANCE OF CASH VERIFICATION PARTICIPANTS. THE INSTRUCTIONS HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO ALL PARTICIPANTS AND A MEETING HAS BEEN ARRANGED TO ENSURE THAT ALL PARTICIPANTS FULLY UNDERSTAND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES.

(4) AS RECOGNIZED IN THE INSPECTORS MEMORANDUM NO. 8, THE EMBASSY HAS A CRITICAL SPACE PROBLEM. IF THE BANK OF HONDURAS WERE TO ASSUME ACCOMMODATION EXCHANGE FUNCTIONS, A SEPARATE ROOM FOR THIS PURPOSE WOULD BE REQUIRED AS IT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 TEGUCI 04803 01 OF 02 061754Z

WOULD NOT BE FEASIBLE TO UTILIZE THE PRESENT CASHIER'S OFFICE. THE CASHIER'S OFFICE IS SMALL AND INEVITABLE PROBLEMS WOULD OCCUR IF DUAL DISBURSING OPERATIONS WERE IN EFFECT THREE MORNINGS A WEEK. THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENT WITH THE BANK OF HONDURAS WHEREIN THEY CASH LOCAL EMPLOYEE PAY CHECKS ALREADY NECESSITATES THE CLOSURE OF THE CASHIER'S OPERATION FOR ONE

AFTERNOON EVERY TWO WEEKS. A FURTHER
CLOSURE THREE MORNINGS PER WEEK WOULD BE
INTOLERABLE. AS THERE IS LITERALLY NO
OTHER OFFICE AVAILABLE FOR THE BANK'S USE,
THE EMBASSY MUST REGRETFULLY HOLD
IN ABEYANCE THIS VERY WORTHWHILE RECOMMENDATION.

(5) THE OHCIR CONTRACT HAS BEEN RENEGOTIATED
AND THE PROFIT MARGIN HAS BEEN REDUCED FROM
20 PERCENT TO EIGHT PERCENT, WHICH IS
CONSIDERED A FAIR AND REASONABLE LEVEL.

(6) ACTION FOR DEPARTMENT.

(7) ACTION FOR DEPARTMENT.

(8) THE SNACK BAR IS OPERATED UNDER THE AUSPICES
OF THE COMMISSARY. THE MISSION ALTERNATE
NURSE WAS RECENTLY ELECTED TO THE COMMISSARY
BOARD AND HAS BEEN GIVEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR
OVERSEEING SANITARY CONDITIONS AT THE SNACK
BAR. IN ADDITION, A HOT WATER SYSTEM IS BEING
INSTALLED WHICH SHOULD ALLEVIATE MANY OF THE
CURRENT POTENTIAL HEALTH HAZARDS.

(9) ACTION FOR DEPARTMENT.

(10) THE EMBASSY NURSE MADE HER INITIAL VISIT TO
SAN PEDRO SULA DURING THE LATTER PART OF JUNE.
THE EMBASSY HAS BUDGETED FOR SEMI-ANNUAL

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PAGE 01 TEGUCI 04803 02 OF 02 061748Z

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ACTION ARA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SIG-01 FS-01 ABF-01 FBO-02 A-01

SY-05 OC-05 CCO-00 PER-01 OPR-02 MMO-01 /041 W

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R 052110Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1640

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FOR ARA/CEN DIRECTOR LAZAR

TRIPS AND THIS ACTIVITY WILL BECOME
A PERMANENT PORTION OF OUR ANNUAL BUDGET
REQUEST.

(11) THE COMBINATION TO THE CABINET CONTAINING
NARCOTICS HAS BEEN CHANGED BY THE NURSE
AND THE COMBINATION IS BEING SAFEGUARDED AS
PRESCRIBED IN 4 FAM 317.3.

(12) TELEPHONE MAINTENANCE IS ONLY ONE OF MANY
DUTIES PERFORMED BY THE GENERAL SERVICES
LOCAL EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBLE FOR TELEPHONE
REPAIRS AND OCCUPIES LESS THAN 10 PERCENT
OF HIS TIME. THE EMBASSY CONSIDERS IT
IMPRACTICAL TO HAVE THIS EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBLE
TO TWO AMERICAN SUPERVISORS AND THEREFORE
THIS FUNCTION WILL BE RETAINED IN THE
GENERAL SERVICES SECTION.

(13) ACTION FOR DEPARTMENT.

C. MEMORANDUM NO. 8 - EMBASSY SPACE PROBLEMS.

(1) THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH FBO
IN REGARD TO OUR SPACE PROBLEM AND DETAILED
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PAGE 02 TEGUCI 04803 02 OF 02 061748Z

DRAWINGS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ADDITIONAL
WING ARE IN THE PROCESS OF COMPLETION. AS
AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE LENGTHY PROCEDURE
NECESSARY TO EXPAND THE EMBASSY PROPER, WE
ARE ALSO ACTIVELY PURSUING THE POSSIBILITY
OF LEASING (FOR VARIOUS US AGENCIES, INCLUDING
STATE) A NEW OFFICE BUILDING WHICH IS BEING
CONSTRUCTED ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE
CHANCERY.

(2) ACTION FOR DEPARTMENT.

D. MEMORANDUM NO. 9 - EMBASSY PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION.

(1) WITH ELECTION OF NEW COMMISSARY BOARD
MEMBERS (OCT. 29, 1975) WHO ARE NOT EMBASSY
ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL, ALL S/IG RECOMMENDATIONS
HAVE NOW BEEN IMPLEMENTED

(2) THIS RECOMMENDATION WAS IMPLEMENTED PRIOR TO
THE INSPECTOR'S DEPARTURE FROM POST AND WILL
BE CONTINUED.

(3) A KARDEX SYSTEM WHICH WAS INSTALLED ONE YEAR AGO
IS BEGINNING TO PROVIDE THE ACCURATE INFORMATION
NEEDED TO MAINTAIN PROPER INVENTORY LEVELS.
THE NEWLY ELECTED COMMISSARY BOARD HAS BEEN
ALERTED TO THIS PROBLEM AND WILL MONITOR IT.

(4) THE SALE OF SNACK BAR CHITS IS NOW BEING HANDLED EXCLUSIVELY BY THE GENERAL SERVICE OFFICER'S SECRETARY.

(5) A DOUBLE TAPE REGISTER HAS BEEN INSTALLED IN THE COMMISSARY AND THE DUPLICATE TAPE IS UTILIZED FOR ACCOUNTING PURPOSES.

E. MEMORANDUM NO. 3 - U.S. POLICY AND OPERATIONS.

PAGE 2 - MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS.

WHILE THE INSPECTORS MADE NO SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATION WITH RESPECT TO THE THEN DAILY CT MEETINGS, THESE MEETINGS ARE NOW HELD ONLY THREE TIMES EACH WEEK - ON MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY.

F. OVERVIEW.

WITH RESPECT TO THE GENERAL RECOMMENDATION ON PAGE 10 OF THIS SECTION REGARDING REDUCTION OF THE AMERICAN PROFILE IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 TEGUCI 04803 02 OF 02 061748Z

CENTRAL AMERICA, THE EMBASSY IS IN FULL ACCORD AND WILL BE GUIDED BY THIS RECOMMENDATION. HOWEVER, THE PRESENT PERSONNEL LEVEL OF EMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA IS REGARDED AS ABOUT AS LEAN AS CONSISTENT WITH THE EFFECTIVE EXECUTION OF THE EMBASSY'S RESPONSIBILITIES. THIS YEAR'S EXPANSION OF AID PERSONNEL WAS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE EXPANDED US ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN RESPONSE TO HURRICANE FIFI AND ITS AFTERMATH AND TO THE RELATIVE DEGREE OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT OF HONDURAS. THE EMBASSY WILL MONITOR THIS LEVEL TO ENSURE A RETURN TO AT LEAST THE FORMER LEVEL AS SOON AS THE SITUATION PERMITS. THE EMBASSY ALSO WILL BE ALERT TO POSSIBILITIES OF REDUCING THE LEVEL, NOT ONLY OF AID AND STATE, BUT OF MILGP, USIS, AND OTHER AGENCIES.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 NOV 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TEGUCI04803
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750386-0412
From: TEGUCIGALPA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751174/aaaacoqx.tel
Line Count: 259
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 SEP 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <12 NOV 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AFSP: FOREIGN SERVICE INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS
TAGS: OGEN, HO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006